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AVIATION

Volume 38, Number 11

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January 1987

Aeronautics Employees Rescue Accident Victims

One person died in the highway inferno. Three others were seriously injured, but alive today due to the quick action of two South Carolina Aeronautics Commission employees.

Special missions pilot Rex Dula and maintenance supervisor Neil Baker, on their way December 4 to deliver a helicopter to Lancaster for electrical modifications, spotted smoke rising from Interstate-77. They descended immediately to investigate and discovered that a tractor-trailer had rammed into a state road crew causing an explosion from a ruptured gasoline tank used to power roadwork signs.

"What caught our attention was a black billow of smoke starting to rise out of the area," said Dula, a 48-year-old pilot with the Aeronautics Commission. "We saw the smoke and decided to go check out what the problem was, to see if it was indeed an accident on the interstate. With all the black smoke, we figured it might be a fuel tanker or something like that."

"When we got over it, we saw it was indeed a tractor-trailer rig and a pick-up truck involved."

According to authorities, the accident occurred about 10:30 a.m. when the tractor-trailer slammed into the rear of a state highway department trailer attached to a dump truck on Interstate 77 about 10 miles west of Great Falls, S.C.

The trailer, mounted with a flashing sign warning of road work, was parked in the right lane. The flashing arrow was directing drivers to move into the left lane while workers repaired a hole in the road surface.

"As we turned over the area, I didn't see any highway patrol cars there yet," said Dula. "At first it looked like two guys were fighting in the road, but what it was was one guy putting the fire out on the other."

"While I secured the aircraft, Neil took off and ran up to the area to see



South Carolina Aeronautics Commission Bell Jet Ranger used during the rescue of accident victims.

what he could do to help. He located the guy with burns over, I guess 90 percent of his body. The other guy had burns all over his hands."

Joseph Sanders, 39, of Chester had extinguished the flames on fellow worker Rodney Howze, 22, of Great Falls.

Upon landing at the site, Baker said it took just a moment to assess the situation.

"People were congregating around these guys in the road," said Baker, a Commission employee for a year and a half.

"I saw that they were still on their feet and able to walk. Seeing that the burn (victim) was the way he was, I knew that man had to get going. He really looked bad."

"Being that there was nothing else available, we put him in the helicopter and decided to get him out of there."

Howze suffered burns over 85 percent of his body. After being taken to the Chester hospital, he was later transferred to the burn unit at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

Sanders was treated for burns on his hands and arms at the Chester hospital and released.

Baker said that after getting the first two into the helicopter, bystanders alerted him to another

injured man.

"They (the bystanders) told me 'hey, there's another man over here,' so I ran back up to him. They had just dragged him away from the truck—the semi."

"All he was saying was, 'my brakes failed, my brakes failed. I hope I haven't hurt anybody.'"

The truck driver, identified as Michael Lawrence Metz, 43, of Virginia, was not burned as badly as the others, but appeared to have injuries to his legs.

"When Neil checked on him, he had obvious injuries to his legs, but said he couldn't feel anything from his waist down," explained Dula. "Our plan at first was to leave Neil and take all three victims to the hospital, but we decided it would do more harm than good if we tried to move him and load him in the helicopter. So we decided to both go in the helicopter in case the guys in the back needed any assistance. They looked like, at the time, like they were ready to go into deep shock."

On his way back to the helicopter, Baker noticed the burning body of Charles Earl, 35, a road crew worker from Richburg, SC.

"It was too late to help him," Baker said. Earl died at the scene.

see employees Page 7



PALMETTO AVIATION is an official publication of the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission. It is designed to inform members of the aviation community, and others interested in aviation, of local developments in aviation and aviation facilities and to keep readers abreast of national and international trends in aviation.

The Aeronautics Commission is a state agency created in 1935 by the S.C. General Assembly to foster and promote air commerce within the state.

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From the Editor...

I hope everyone had a wonderful and joyous Christmas. Before going further, let me take this moment to wish each of you a very healthy and prosperous New Year.

This coming year promises many new and exciting challenges. Particularly for the newsletter.

I have been on the job three months now and have met and made many new friends. That is one aspect of P.R. work that never gets old... meeting new people. I look forward to meeting more of you this year.

In the last three issues of *Palmetto Aviation*, we have introduced a few of the changes that I hope to make permanent in the future. I realize that it will take some time to catch on. Changes always do. However, I am confident that articles such as "Instructor's Corner," "Never...Ever Again" and "Sandlappers in Aviation" are the kind of articles you want.

As I said in last month's issue, however, for these articles to continue I need your help. *Palmetto Aviation* is YOUR newsletter. Send me the news and information that you want to see printed in it.

I'm optimistic that this year will present more information than I can use each month. That would be fine because lessons for "Instructors Corner" can be stored and run in the future. The same is true for "Never...Ever Again."

I hope all of you enjoy the article on Lynn Woofter this month. The plan here is to highlight a "Sandlapper in Aviation" at least every other month. I have a couple of other people in mind, but if you know someone in your area that you think might make an interesting article, let me know or write an article yourself. We'll even give you a by-line.

Of course any black and white photos you might loan us will be treated with care and returned promptly after their use

I am really excited about "Never...Ever Again." A special thanks to Harry Dixon for sharing his experience with us. Hopefully someone will take the incident to heart and perhaps refrain from becoming another statistic.

I am certain that there are more Harry Dixons out there with more lessons learned. Share your experiences with fellow pilots. Who knows, you might save a life.

Someone asked the other day how much should he write. As a guide, consider Mr. Dixon's letter. It was about a page and a half, hand-written on 8 1/2 by 11 stationary.

I have used this space for the past three months now to tell you my thoughts on the newsletter and to solicit your participation in it. I will continue to do so from time to time in the future. What I would really like to do with this space though, is to include a "Letters to the Editor" column.

If you have something on your mind concerning the newsletter, the Commission, an article we printed or anything to do with aviation, drop me a line.

I request only two things, that they be short and to the point, and they must be signed in the original form. If you want your name withheld, say so, but the letter must be signed with an address and phone number so that I can verify that you sent it.

I must reserve the right to edit your letters for space. I will not edit for content. I will also do my utmost to provide an answer where one is needed or appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you and the invitation to stop by for a cup of coffee is always open.

Again let me wish you all a profitable and happy new year.

Fly safe.



C.A.P. NEWS

The Civil Air Patrol celebrated its 45th birthday on Dec. 1. Established in 1941, one week before Pearl Harbor, the CAP won fame for its role in the defense of the U. S., especially through its coastal patrol.

The CAP is a civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force with headquarters at Maxwell AFB, AL. It has eight regional offices and 54 wing offices, one in each state plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

South Carolina's Wing Headquarters are located at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport. The S. C. wing has 18 CAP squadrons throughout

Eunice Laird Honored at Oklahoma Air-Space Museum



Eunice Laird, veteran employee of Hawthorne Aviation in Charleston, South Carolina, has been honored by the Oklahoma Air-Space Museum in their "Women in Aviation" exhibit. Miss Laird has been with Hawthorne since December of 1945 and has served in many crucial positions during the company's history.

Miss Laird played an active part in aviation's adolescent years. She was born in Orangeburg, South Carolina where she remained and made her entrance into the field of aviation as the Secretary to the Commandant of cadets at the U.S. Army Air Corps primary flight training school. The school was operated by Hawthorne Aviation, whose owner "Bevo" Howard was a famous aerobatic pilot. Miss Laird worked closely with Bevo during the war years. She agreed to come to Charleston at war's end on a "temporary" basis to help Howard set

the state.

••The S.C. CAP recently received an overall excellent rating in their annual Graded Disaster Relief Evaluation generated by the S.C. Emergency Preparedness Division. Disaster exercises included a tornado, chemical truck fire and a release of toxic gas from a power plant.

••The Myrtle Beach Cadet Squadron was selected last month as South Carolina's "Squadron of the Year" for 1986. In addition to winning "top honors," members also captured a Unit Citation Award for their performance during a management effectiveness inspection.

••CAP Capt. Boyd Worsham of Anderson has been named commander of the Anderson Composite Squadron by Col. Douglas Abercrombie, commander of the S.C. Wing. Worsham, a Honea Path patrolman, previously served the squadron as deputy commander.

••Lake City CAP Commander, 1st Lt. Tommy Mitchum recently received the "Senior Member of the Year" award for 1986. Mitchum was selected from over 500 members across the state and is the first member from the Pee Dee area to earn this distinguished award.

up his office. She planned to return to Orangeburg in no more than a few months.

On December 4, 1985, Eunice Laird celebrated her 40th anniversary at Hawthorne and her 38th "temporary" year in Charleston. She is still a full time employee as Corporate Secretary and a director of Hawthorne Aviation. "Miss Eunice" is known by virtually hundreds of people who have flown into Hawthorne over the years. She truly has been a "woman in aviation" since the industry was in its infancy. In announcing her inclusion in the display in Oklahoma City, Vernon B. Strickland, chairman of Hawthorne, said "I have never known her to refuse help to a fellow employee or customer. She has made more friends for herself and Hawthorne than any of the rest of us and has been a mainstay throughout most of Hawthorne's history."

Hawthorne Aviation is a subsidiary of Hawthorne Corporation, a diversified company based in Charleston, South Carolina. The company also has subsidiaries in real estate, aircraft distribution, airline servicing, financial services, industrial distribution and government contracting.

Breakfast Club



Jan. 11	Dorchester County Summerville
Jan. 25	Grand Strand North Myrtle Beach (Don's Pancake House)
Feb. 8	Charleston Executive John's Island Hosted by Seabrook Island For weekend reservations, call 1-800-922-2401; ask for Nancy Leach. Discounts available.
Feb. 22	Woodward Field Camden
Mar. 8	Open
Mar. 22	Darlington County Darlington
Apr. 5	Open
Apr. 19	Twin Lakes Aiken
May 3	Berkeley County Moncks Comer
May 17	Laurens County (Laurens County Jubilee)

Air Force veteran takes over as airport director

A 37-year Air Force veteran who started his career as a 19-year-old B-17 pilot during World War II has agreed to take the job as director of the Florence City-County Airport.

Rocky Gannon of Darlington was named acting director until Dec. 22 when former director Ron Bowling's resignation became effective. Gannon took over as director.

Bowling resigned last month after more than three years at the Florence airport.

Gannon, who retired as an Air Force Lieutenant Colonel in 1980, served a year and a half on the airport commission before resigning last month. Since his retirement, he has been commuting between Washington and his home. He has been acting as an aviation consultant there.

He is a veteran of World War II, the Korean Conflict and 387 combat missions in Vietnam.

Gannon has flown everything from gliders to jet fighters to bombers and was also one of the Air Force's first air traffic controllers.

see Gannon Page 6

SANDLAPPERS

by Louise Ervin,
(with permission: The Anderson
Independent-Mail)

Photos by Owen L. Riley, Jr. and Lynn
Woofter

A dead-end road near the banks of Little River in Honea Path, S.C. is an unlikely place for a manufacturing company where parts for the rakish Defiant Twin-engine airplanes are made. But according to craftsman Lynn Woofter, who moved here to make parts for the home-built aircraft, the location is perfect.

Woofter, a Florida native and Tom Selleck look-alike, is one of two such builders in the United States.

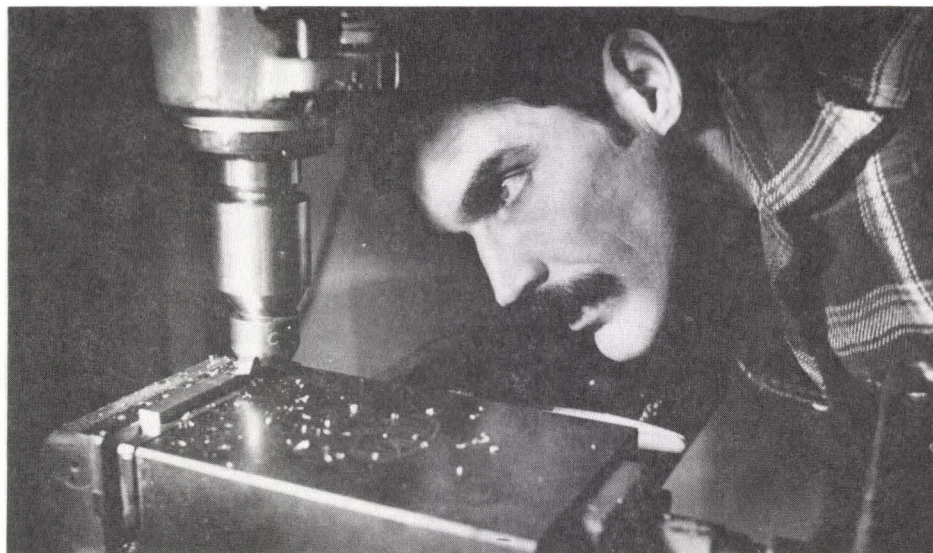
An experienced machinist and welder, Woofter said he had always wanted to be in business for himself. "The opportunity came when Eastern Airline pilot, Captain Charlie Gray, told me he was having difficulty finding parts for his Defiant," said Woofter. "I jumped at the chance to build them."

"I'm impressed with this airplane," he said. "It's been proven to be the largest, safest, home-built plane in existence today."

The Defiant, designed by Burt Rutan of Mojave, Calif., has a 200 mph cruising speed and a fore and aft twin-engine configuration that eliminates the approximate 8-second time period for switching wing-mounted engines in case of an engine failure. On top of that, the plane will not stall or spin, Woofter said.

There has been a big demand for parts since Rutan Aircraft Factory in Mojave, Calif. offered a limited number of plans for the Defiant at a cost of \$500 each. But Woofter said there are some companies now that produce prefab fiberglass components that would ease the home-built demand. Rutan is the designer of the famous "Voyager" which just recently completed a round-the-world, non-stop, unrefueled flight.

"Rutan is considered by many to be another Orville Wright of aviation," Woofter said. "Rutan came out with the Defiant about seven years ago. It



An experienced machinist and welder, Woofter checks the drilling position of a piece of alloy on one of his milling machines.

is a twin engine, four place home-built from a proven design, that has a 1,600 mile range. Rutan's innovative Defiant design has been in the aviation news since it was introduced."

According to Woofter, there are only seven Defiants in the air right now, and probably 100 more in production. "Potential customers are scrambling for the plans," he said. "Once an individual purchases the plans, they enter into a buyers agreement not to pass the plans around."

The young craftsman has customers from all over the country; most of his customers are doctors, engineers and airline pilots.

Woofter said he has been doing this kind of work for 20 years. "About three years ago I started building a home-built airplane for myself," he said.

"I'm experienced in metal work—I had my own lathe at age 15 and wanted to work seriously in the field even then," he said. "Then, I was a boat captain for 12 years, operating a sport fishing boat out of Florida, I sort of slid into this work accidentally when my pilot friend asked me to make three sets of parts for him."

Woofter explained that two sets were for his friend and one was for

Johnny Murphy, a retired NASA engineer who is one of the foremost composite builders in the United States.

"That got me into the business and by word of mouth others heard about me and wanted orders filled right away. So, I decided to build a dozen sets. That's when I started looking for a place to build a small plant."

He and his wife, Judy, looked at 12 other buildings before choosing the Little River location. They have owned the property about a year and have completed a metal building which houses the shop in one end and spacious living quarters in an area with a southern exposure.

"We make the metal machined and welded parts right here on our equipment. Whenever possible, we make everything in multiple sets to save set-up time," the soft-spoken craftsman said.

Judy helps by taking care of the correspondence via a word processor, as well as the shipping and recordkeeping.

Woofter said the hardest part of having his own business is staying self-motivated. "Of course I have the pressure of customers who want delivery as soon as possible," he said.

"We are equipped to make any type metal parts for automobiles, fine guns

IN AVIATION...

and motorcycles, but I advise people to first check out the availability of mass-produced parts before the order one custom-made. With today's computer controlled manufacturing, the costs can be held to a minimum as compared to 'one-off' custom parts."

As for making Defiant parts, Woofers only wants to take on as much business as he can handle on his own.

"There are a lot of risks in our business," he said, pointing out that the potential for liability is great. "When I have to stand good for what I make, you can be sure everything we ship out goes through my hands. With me doing all the work, quality control is exactly where I want it."

Woofter said the number of home-built aircraft is at an all time high because of the liability situation. Manufacturers of certified aircraft must pass the cost of liability insurance on to their customers. As a result, half to two-thirds of the cost of an airplane is for the airplane and the rest is for liability insurance.

"The only way a private citizen can own a Defiant is to build one himself," Woofter said. "This way the owner pays \$20,000 to \$40,000 for the plane, plus two years of his time. The good part is the plane's performance is comparable to that of a \$300,000 airplane."

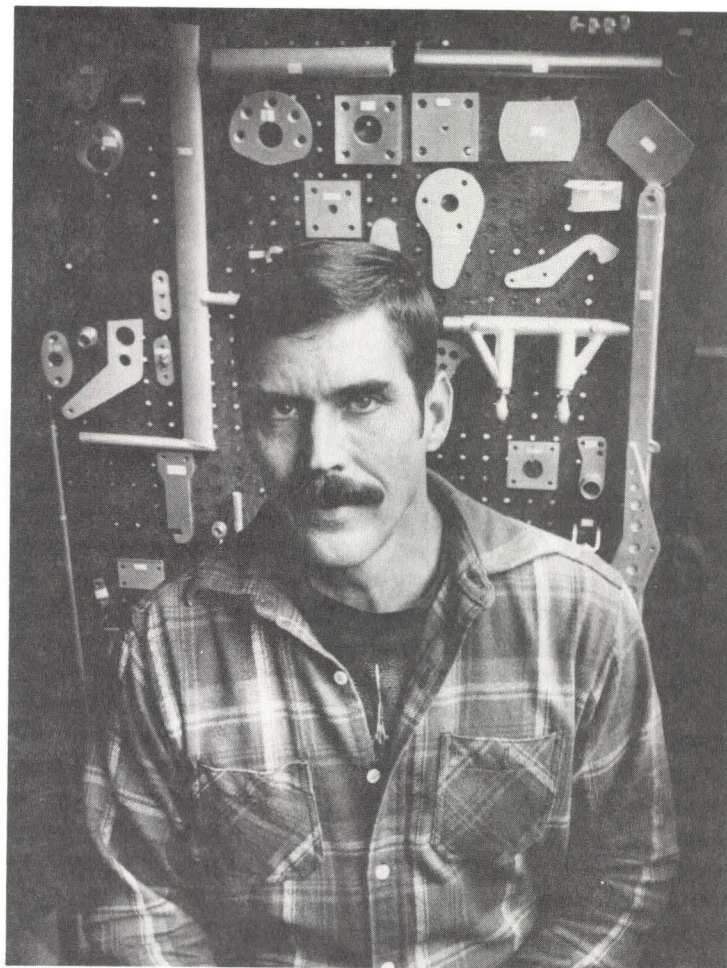
Most of his business comes from people who hear about his work at air shows. Just last month he received orders from a businessman in Saudi Arabia and another from Australia.

Woofter is also an auto racing enthusiast and he and Judy relax by riding their motorcycles over country roads in the Mount Bethel community.

When he isn't filling orders for customers, Woofter is working on his own plane, a Long-Ez, single-engine two-seater also designed by Rutan. "I could have it finished in two years, depending on the number of orders I get," he said.

see Woofter page 7

Defiant Aircraft Parts Builder Finds Full-Time Job In Hobby



Lynn Woofter, a Florida native now living in Honea Path, sits in front of some of his handcrafted Defiant aircraft parts.

Capt. Charlie Gray in Defiant N86BJ during a test flight over Kissimmee, FL.



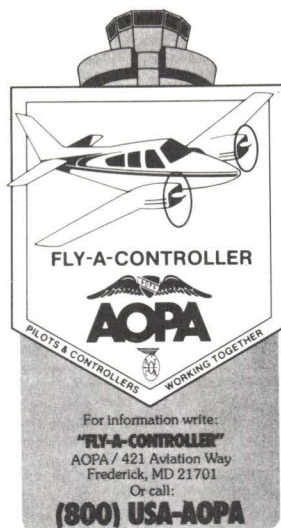
FLY-A-CONTROLLER PROGRAM GETS RAVE REVIEWS

Hundreds of air traffic controllers around the country have already participated in the AOPA-sponsored, FAA-endorsed Fly-A-Controller program by going on familiarization flights with general aviation pilots.

"The response from pilots and controllers alike has been extremely positive and gratifying," said Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association president John L. Baker. "In just the four months since the program began, many hundreds of air traffic personnel from control towers, air route traffic control centers and flight service stations have experienced the airspace system from the front seat of a general aviation aircraft. We've received glowing reports about the program from both controllers and pilots."

Baker said the AOPA members had responded enthusiastically to the program, with hundreds of queries and flights made in just the first few months. "We know of members who plan on flying all the personnel from large flight service stations, and at least one member has taken controllers on a balloon familiarization flight. Others have taken up their mayors or city councilmen in addition to flying controllers."

Paul H. Smith, director of the AOPA Air Traffic Control department, said,



"the Fly-A-Controller program has been and continues to be such a success that we've had specific requests from airway facilities technicians as well as military air traffic personnel to participate in the program. We will certainly encourage our members to take as many air traffic control-related personnel flying as possible."

Across the country, controllers are going flying with general aviation pilots in aircraft from Learjets to two-seat Cherokee 140s, with airline transport-rated pilots to airborne traffic reporters. "Communications between pilots and controllers are being enhanced by this program," said Smith. "In fact, the controllers who have accepted flights say they hope all their colleagues can participate."

SHAW AFB NAMES NEW COMMANDER

An officer at a Florida base will replace the commander of Shaw Air Force Base, who was re-assigned in the wake of two fatal air crashes at the facility near here, officials said.

Col. Jay C. Callaway, vice commander of the 31st Tactical Fighter Wing at Homestead AFB in Florida, replaces Col. Russell M. Lanning as commander of Shaw, said base spokesman Lt. Col. Gerald Stafford.

Callaway, 45, a decorated Vietnam veteran, has more than 5,600 flying hours in a variety of military aircraft, including T-37s, T-38s, F-4s, F-10s, F-5s and F-16s. He received the Bronze Star and the Distinguished Flying Cross among other honors, Stafford said.

Callaway joined the Air Force in 1963 when he completed the Air Force ROTC program at Florida State University. He flew 196 combat missions over North Vietnam and Laos during the war in Southeast Asia, Stafford said.

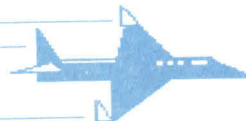
Before becoming vice commander

of the 31st wing, Callaway was a deputy commander for operations of the 56th Tactical Training Wing at McDill AFB in Florida.

The change in command of the 363rd Tactical Fighter Wing at Shaw follows two fatal crashes near the air base in just more than one month.

Gannon from Page 3

His career in aviation, both military and civilian, has included aircraft operations, airfield management, air traffic control inspection, operations and maintenance, navigational aids and landing systems, flight inspection, airborne evaluation of air traffic services, flight facilities management, aircraft accident investigation, technical writing, design and development of airport air traffic control and communications systems.



Sight in the Dark of Night

Pilots who have 20/20 vision may require glasses if they want to see right at night.

That 20/20 vision, as measured at the last physical, is far from a guarantee that one's night vision is anywhere near as capable. In fact, many people who have perfect day vision are quite definitely myopic (nearsighted) at night and should be wearing glasses, say some experts.

Night myopia is a little-known and little-recognized factor which may represent a significant aviation hazard, all the more so because of the false confidence instilled by that 20/20 daytime vision report handed the pilot after a quick look at the eye chart in the bright light of the AME's office.

How can a person have perfect vision by day and be nearsighted by night? The answer lies in the differing frequency of colors which prevail at the two times, and the varying ability of the eye's lens to focus them.

By day, red-orange colors predominate. A lens (natural or artificial) which is quite capable of focusing these wave-lengths on the retina may come up short (literally) when it tries to put the night's more violet wavelengths where they belong. The lens has enough elasticity to focus the light from nearby objects (thus the nearsightedness), but can't do the job on far-away items.

Such changes in focusing ability are largely age-related, and start showing up as early as a person's late 20s or early 30s. For those who are myopic as measured in a daylight exam, night will exacerbate the problem and their daytime glasses probably provide inadequate correction for night.

For pilots who fly at night, a thorough test of their night vision could prove to be a real life-saver.

NEW FLIGHT CENTER OPENS...

The North American Institute of Aviation Flight Center and Administration Building opened last month in ceremonies that marked the completion of a \$2 million expansion program.

The expansion, which includes enlargement of NAIA's School of Aviation Technology and on-campus housing for 128 students, brings the institute's enrollment capacity to 340.

NAIA is located at the Conway-Horry County airport and has trained professional pilots from almost 50 countries since it opened in 1972.

Employees from Page 1

On their way to the Chester County Hospital, which took about eight minutes, the crew notified the S.C. Highway Patrol, the Chester police dispatch which dispersed ambulances and fire equipment to the scene, and the hospital.

The Aeronautics Commission employees, aware that they were not equipped to offer any first aid, said they felt time was the most important thing.

"It's frustrating to see that kind of pain and anguish, and you can just do so much," said Dula. "Not being able to help the third guy was really frustrating."

"But transport was the big thing. It looked like time was going to be of the essence to prevent shock. Especially the burned guy. He could have gone like that," said Dula snapping his fingers. "We could have lost him. The only place he wasn't burned, including the top of his head, were where his boots were on, his jockey shorts, and just scraps of a T-shirt."

"It was not a very pretty sight," added Baker.

"The one guy who wasn't burned so bad was starting to get a little hysterical," explained Dula. "I had to yell at him to calm him down."

"The other one had already passed that point. He had gotten real quiet like he was going into shock. They weren't coherent enough to even tell us who they were."

After seeing the victims into the hospital, they took off and flew back over the accident site to find that the Highway Patrol had arrived.

Dula, a helicopter pilot in Vietnam for a year and a half, said he has stopped at several accident sites before, but never at one where he had to make a decision concerning someone who was that critically injured.

Although the effort was extraordinary, neither Dula or Baker consider themselves heroes. Dula said that when he first saw the scene, it brought back memories of the war. He believes his experiences in the war helped that day.

"I think it helped me keep my composure to do the job at hand," he

said. "It's just a normal thing you find yourself doing if you fly helicopters around something unusual like that. You just go take a look, because you never know when you might be able to help."



Ag-Pilots Plan Convention at Myrtle Beach

The South Carolina Agricultural Aviation Association will hold its annual Convention and refresher program at the Ocean Dunes and Sand Dunes Resort hotel at Myrtle Beach, S.C. on January 29 & 30, 1987.

This year's convention will begin at 11:00 AM on Jan. 29th with registration and a meeting of the Board of Directors. The program will get under way at 1:00 PM with a welcome by President Roland Richardson and briefings by FAA and South Carolina Aeronautics Commission personnel.

The aerial applicator refresher course, under the direction of Dr. Mac Horton of Clemson University, will begin at 2:00 PM and continue until 5:00 PM and an Allied Industry reception is scheduled for 6:30 PM.

The refresher course will continue on Friday morning. A business luncheon is to be held at 12 noon, followed by a business session and the election of officers for the coming year.

The program will conclude with an Awards Banquet and reception on Friday night.

For additional information on registration and exhibit space contact Jack Barry, 924 Brantley Street, Columbia, S.C. 29210, phone 772-7889.

Woofter from page 5

Once the plane is completed, the Woofters plan a flight to the West Coast where they have relatives. "We'll also take it to airshows where we hope to meet a lot of interesting people," he said. ■

New AWOS System To Provide Pilot Weather Updates

Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) developed by Handar, Inc., has been approved by the FAA for use near airport runway touchdown zones to provide pilots with continuous updates of weather conditions.

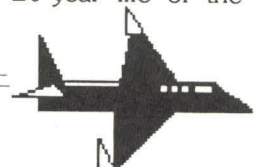
The system is the first to be approved under stringent new performance criteria adopted by the FAA earlier this year. Other manufacturers' AWOS systems have been operating in a limited capacity as advisory systems under original FAA guidelines established in 1979. The new guidelines added more rigorous testing and increased product support requirements.

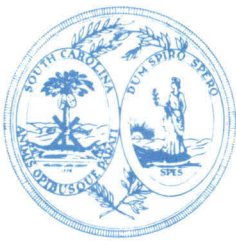
The FAA plans to install AWOS equipment at more than 700 airports, including many without towers used by general aviation aircraft.

The basic Handar system reports wind speed and direction, temperature, dew point and barometric pressure, updated each minute. Optional equipment still under evaluation by the FAA includes sensors for precipitation, visibility and cloud height.

Weather information is provided to pilots by a synthesized voice broadcast over a very high frequency radio or via telephone. Reports also can be accessed by a computer.

Handar's first commercial installation is expected to be San Jose, California, International Airport, where the company's system has been under test over the past year. The company said it can install an operational system at San Jose within 90 days after receipt of an order. The price of this system ranges from \$19,950 to \$100,000, depending on configuration. The company estimates the AWOS market in the U.S. at more than \$150 million over the 20-year life of the FAA program.





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AERONAUTICS COMMISSION
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BULK RATE
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Never...Ever Again!!!

by Harry E. Dixon, Chesterfield

What I am writing about is the article "Time Runs Out...When Flying in Clouds Without Training" (Nov. 1986). It should be required reading for all private pilots.

I know how true the scenario is. I have been in just almost the same situation. I flew from Cheraw, S.C. to Tucson, Arizona in my Cessna 150 following Interstate-10. Everything was just fine going out, the weather was beautiful.

On the way back, however, things changed. We (my brother was with me) were flying through the "Rockies" with 8,000 foot mountains when we started into poor visibility and rather than turning back to Van Horn as I should have, I kept going.

It was almost a disaster. I heard the stall warning horn twice, not knowing which way was up or down.

My brother was looking at a chart on his lap and said we were flying

...we were flying south and there were 8,000 foot mountains in that direction. I felt faint...

south and that there were 8,000 foot mountains in that direction. I felt faint and as quickly as I could turned west.

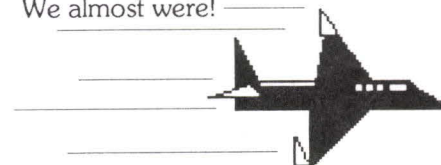
In about ten minutes, which seemed like ten hours, we suddenly caught

site of the ground. It was a cattle watering hole. I was making preparations to land when we looked over to our right and saw some large tractor-trailer vans...I-10!

We went back to Van Horn and waited for things to clear up...what I should have done long before.

I have a moral to add to this story. I was a newly rated instrument pilot, and was "instrument qualified." Anyone without instrument training would surely be dead.

We almost were! _____



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